



Post-Forum Report

Idaho Youth Leadership Forum is sponsored by the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Idaho Department of Education, and the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Family and Community Services

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Introduction

Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a career leadership training program for high school juniors and seniors with disabilities. The YLF provides young people with disabilities with an opportunity to learn full citizenship skills, thereby enhancing both their employment potential and their ability to contribute to society. Developed by the California Governor's Committee for Employment of Disabled Persons in 1992, and now a program of the US Department of Labor, the YLF has been replicated in over 35 states, DC and Puerto Rico. Idaho conducted its first state YLF in July of 2001.





Delegates

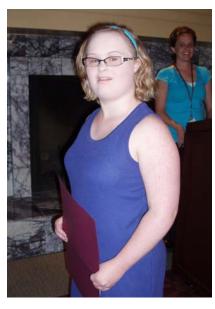
Idaho junior and senior high school students with disabilities from around the state are encouraged to apply to be a delegate at the forum in Boise held during the summer. All applicants are interviewed by YLF staff prior to being selected. Delegates are selected based on their application essay and letters of recommendation which speak to their demonstrated leadership potential.

Eighteen delegates were chosen to attend the 2008 forum from around Idaho:

Clayton Ackerman	Bancroft
Jessica Besel	Nampa
Carmen Curtis	Jerome
Kandice Daniels	Hope
Mathew Gneiting	Rigby
Melissa Guymon	Gooding
Blanca Lopes	Payette
Omar Luna	Terreton
Tiffany Moore	Marsing
Rebecca Page	Nampa



Anna Pitts	Parma
Danielle Reff	Boise
David Rich	Nampa
Ashley Skaar	Firth
Scott Smith	Nampa
Terry Starnes	Hayden
LaNae Waddell	Fruitland



Program

Delegates attended presentations and participated in activities to learn about: disability history and culture, principles of leadership, self-advocacy, career and educational options, and community resources.

Delegates were introduced to ways they can effect positive change in their communities through policy and other means. They met with Governor Otter, had breakfast with policymakers from various levels of government, toured the legislature and learned about the legislative process. Finally, the delegates completed a

leadership plan with personal goals in a variety of areas that will help them develop leadership skills and work towards positive change.

Presentations provided during YLF included:

What Is Leadership Richard Pimentel

The Experience of Disability –
History and Culture
Kelly Buckland, State Independent Living Council



What It Means To Be a Self-Advocate Becky Woodhead, Idaho SALN

Going to College –
Preparing for Post-Secondary Education
Candida Mumford, CSI

Living on My Own Mike Gibson, BSU and TJ Squires, BSU

What Can Technology Do For Me? Todd Devries, ISU and Kathy Griffin, UCPI

Finding and Keeping a Job Keith Whiting, Idaho Dept. of Labor and Youth Navigators

Finding a Purpose and Making a Difference Marilyn Sword, ICDD and Kelly Buckland, SILC

Policymaker Panel:

State Senator Kate Kelly, Tammy Perkins - Governor Otter, Fran Symms - Rep. Mike Simpson, Kitty Kunz - Rep. Bill Sali, Christine Starr - Boise City Attorney and former BSU Student Body President, Matt McCarter - Safe and Drug-free Schools Coordinator, Idaho Dept. of Education





Activities

Small Group Discussions and Worksheets - Delegates participated in a small group team to discuss presentations and apply information learned to their personal goals and leadership plans. Some of the work they completed in small groups and on their own included: indentifying assets and strengths, identifying barriers to assertiveness, independent living assessment, process for making decisions,

assistive technology lab, preparing for their job shadow experience, and identifying national, state, and community issues they want to work on.

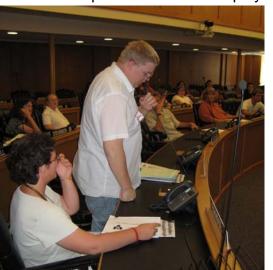
Job Shadow Experience – During the interview process, delegates told us the career or job they are interested in pursuing. Job mentors were found around the Treasure Valley who were professionals







working in those jobs. This activity is always a favorite with YLF delegates and began with a luncheon with the job mentors. After lunch each delegate spent the afternoon with their job shadow mentor on the job site. Counselors worked with delegates following the experience to debrief and record what they found out about the job, training required and next steps to reach their employment goals.



Tour of the Legislature – Delegates were guided on a tour through the Idaho

legislature by Marilyn Sword. She provided information about the legislative process and the role of citizens while walking through the Capitol Annex building, House and Senate chambers and committee rooms. Bonnie Alexander, the House of Representatives Chief Clerk, invited the delegates into the House chambers where they sat in the Representative's chairs, took turns being speaker of the House, learned about proper procedure and how to talk like a legislator.



Meeting with the Governor – delegates met with Governor Otter in his office and he asked them about their activities for the week, plans for the future. He was interested in the delegates' descriptions of their job shadow experiences.

Barbecue in the Park with Partners in Policymaking – A joint activity was planned to connect YLF delegates with Partners in Policymaking graduates in their regional areas. Participants enjoyed good food, Dutch oven cooked deserts, tie dying their event t-shirts,

team building activity in regional groups, and music by Chase Doty and the Country Boys which included a very popular karaoke opportunity.

Celebration Luncheon - The forum ended with a celebration and awards luncheon where the delegates received certificates of completion and awards from their fellow delegates. A slide show of photos taken during the week displayed through lunch and delegates were invited to take the podium and talk about their experience at YLF. This year, every delegate chose to speak to the group and many felt that YLF was a life changing experience



for them. They said they made new friends, understood more about people with disabilities other than their own, learned about themselves, came out of their shell, and did some things they didn't know they could do. Everyone exchanged contact information before the delegates left for home.



Staff and Volunteers

Youth Leadership Forum would not be possible without the dedicated staff and volunteers that help with planning and on-site during the forum. The Council on Developmental Disabilities contracted with Susan Angel, **YLF Coordinator**, to coordinate planning and preparation for YLF. Susan supported the Planning Committee, prepared materials, and made all arrangements for the forum, including travel, housing, food, presenters, job shadow mentors, ASL interpreters and other support staff.



YLF Counselors are young people with disabilities who work with student delegates throughout the week, leading small groups and supporting delegates to participate in all activities. Counselors were selected through an application process. YLF was very fortunate to have Jonas Gomez, YLF graduate and staff from California, participate this year as a Counselor. His experience with youth and knowledge of the California YLF program was very helpful.

2008 YLF Counselors:

Jessica Croner, ISU student

Jonas Gomez, student, YLF graduate/staff
Veronica Munoz, CSI student

Tina Noreen, LIFE Inc. disability advocate

Emilie Pennie, ISU student

Twin Falls

Fillmore, California

Paul

Pocatello

Boise

Becky Woodhead, Idaho SALN member Nampa







Support staff included American Sign Language interpreters, an on-call nurse and "dorm mom" Tracy Warren. YLF Coordinator, Susan Angel was on hand to make sure everything went smoothly with housing, food, and other activity arrangements.

Onsite staff and volunteers were invaluable this year and worked very long hours with little rest. It would be difficult to show adequate appreciation to Nora Jehn from the Idaho Assistive Technology Project, Janice Carson from the Idaho Dept. of Education, and Paula Mason from CSI and the Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind for their tireless enthusiasm and support for delegates.

The **YLF Planning Committee** consists of volunteers who are individuals or representatives from various

agencies, organizations and community partners. The committee met throughout the year to plan for YLF and included representatives from the following agencies and organizations:

Boise State University, Disability Resource Center

Center on Disability and Human Development, University of Idaho

City of Boise, Parks and Recreation

College of Southern Idaho, Disability Services

Idaho Assistive Technology Project

Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities

Idaho Department of Education

Idaho Federation of Families for Children's

Mental Health

Idaho State University, Disability Services

Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind

State Independent Living Council

United Cerebral Palsy of Idaho

And the following individuals:

Tanya Bethel, teacher

Veronica Munoz, student, College of Southern Idaho

Sara Cahoon, student at Boise State University





Program Implementation Costs

Total costs for the 2008 forum were approximately \$52,050.00. This does not include ICDD, SDE, and Idaho AT Project staff time. Base financial support was provided by the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Idaho Department of Education (\$20,000) and the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (\$5,000).

Summary of Evaluations

Delegates completed a partial evaluation form at the end of each day to rate quality of presentations and a final evaluation on the last day of the forum. In addition, YLF Counselors and staff were asked to provide an evaluation and feedback with suggestions for program improvement. Below are the survey questions. Delegates marked one of these responses: fully agree, agree, agree slightly, or disagree. The responses from delegates are included in the table.

Survey Questions:

How Was YLF? - Tell us what you think.

- 1. I learned a lot about leadership -- in general -- that I did not know before.
- 2. I increased my understanding of what leadership means for me and how I will be a leader in the future.
- 3. I believe it will be an asset to me that I met a mentor or fellow advocate at YLF.
- 4. I am more confident about developing my own leadership network.
- 5. My job shadow mentor experience will help me make decisions about my future job.
- 6. I know more about assistive technology than I did before the YLF.
- 7. I plan to explore more about assistive technology in the future.
- 8. YLF helped me understand my rights as a person with a disability.
- 9. I know more about the ADA than I did before.
- 10. My Personal Leadership Plan is a good guide for the future.
- 11. Meeting with policymakers and going to the legislature increased my knowledge about politics.
- 12. I am more confident about communicating with political leaders.
- 13. Working with my small group was a good way for me to learn about leadership.
- 14. I was treated with respect and dignity during YLF.
- 15. My Counselors knew a lot about leadership and were helpful.
- 16. The YLF Delegate Binder was helpful and easy to use.
- 17. I will stay in touch with other YLF Delegates in the future.

Summary of survey responses follows...

	Survey Statement	Fully Agree	Agree	Agree Slightly	Dis- agree	No Answer	Total
1	Learned a lot about leadership	6	3	2	1	0	12
2	Increased understanding of how I can be a leader	7	3	2	0	0	12
3	Meeting mentor/delegates was an asset	9	1	0	2	0	12
4	Confident to develop leadership network	6	5	1	0	0	12
5	Job shadow experience will help future decisions	9	0	1	2	0	12
6	Know more about assistive technology	4	6	2	0	0	12
7	Plan to explore more assistive technology	6	3	2	1	0	12
8	YLF helped me understand my rights	6	4	1	0	1	12
9	I know more about the ADA	3	5	1	1	2	12
10	Personal leadership plan is a good future guide	6	3	2	0	1	12
11	Increased my knowledge about politics	7	3	1	0	1	12
12	Confident to communicate with political leaders	4	4	3	0	1	12
13	Small group was good way to learn about leadership	4	4	3	0	1	12
14	I was treated with respect and dignity	6	1	4	0	1	12
15	Counselors knew a lot about leadership	5	3	2	1	1	12
16	Delegate binder was helpful and easy to use	5	1	5	0	1	12
17	Stay in touch with YLF delegates in the future	7	2	3	0	0	12